

Happenings in the Industry

Society Plans Electric-Range Campaign—Railway Operation Discussed at New York—Electric-Range Conditions in the West—H. L. Doherty Speaks on Utility Regulation—Electric Vehicle Meeting at Boston—Preparedness Committee Organized—Indiana New Business Men Meet at Kokomo—Miscellaneous News

HOLD IMPORTANT ELECTRIC-RANGE MEETING IN NEW YORK.

Society for Electrical Development to Promote Greater Cooperation and Conduct Comprehensive Campaign.

A special meeting was held April 14, 1916, at the executive offices of the Society for Electrical Development in New York, to consider the undertaking of a special electric range campaign with the industry as well as directing public attention to the advantages of electric cooking. Those attending were representatives of leading electric range manufacturers. The meeting was preliminary to the appointment of a national electric range committee composed of representatives of all electric interests.

It is recognized that the attention of leading interests is being focused upon the desirability of the electric range as a means of building up the domestic load. Several manufacturers are contemplating big campaigns to promote electric range sales and it was reasoned that the Society for Electrical Development would be the best organization to act as a clearing house for the campaign as it did in the "Wire Your Home" movement which has just come to a successful close. It would be the function of the Society to lend support to central stations by giving them specific data on the desirability of range business and to aid them in conducting range campaigns. Sales arguments for range salesmen to use could be standardized as much as possible and then published in book form to be used by the individual salesmen. It was proposed that the Society issue a booklet on how to put on a range campaign.

Considerable stress was laid upon the suggestion that central stations include cost of installation in their range prices. In other words quoting prices with the range installed, thus avoiding selling the range and having then to argue out the cost of installation.

The Society would aid in developing the public demand for ranges by disseminating advertising and publicity matter through its various channels.

It was decided to appoint a special committee to take up in detail the plans for a national electric range campaign. This committee will meet in Chicago May 22, the first day of the convention of the National Electric Light Association.

Lectures on Electrical Subjects to Minnesota Students.

Charles L. Pillsbury, consulting engineer, Minneapolis, Minn., who has recently completed extensive valuation work in Detroit, Washington and other cities, is delivering a course of 18 lectures on "The Valuation of Electrical Properties" for the fifth-year engineering students at the University of Minnesota. R. A. Lundquist, consulting electrical engineer, Minneapolis, Minn., is giving a course of lectures to the fifth-year electrical engineering students on "Transmission Line Construction." Fred Dustin, of the Standard Electric Company of Minneapolis, is giving a course of lectures to the sophomore and junior electrical engineering students on the "Practical Applications of the National Electrical Code."

RAILWAY OPERATION WITH HIGH DIRECT VOLTAGES.

Monthly Meeting of the American Institute of Electrical Engineers at New York City.

At the 320th meeting of the American Institute of Electrical Engineers, held in New York City on the evening of April 14, a paper entitled "High-Voltage Direct-Current Railway Practice," by Clarence Renshaw, was the subject of discussion. In the absence of the author the paper was presented by N. W. Storer.

This paper pointed out the recent increase of operating voltages on direct-current railways, after many years of operation at about 600 volts, which seemed at one time to represent a standardized maximum. The differences in apparatus necessary for the high voltages was first considered, and the probability of still higher voltages pointed out. The author then described the 5,000-volt equipment which has been tried on the Grass Lake line of the Michigan United Traction Company. The ear on this line has run over 30,000 miles since October 1, 1915, in all kinds of weather and most of the trouble was not occasioned by the high voltage used. The author considers that it would be desirable to standardize 5,000 volts for direct-current equipment.

The discussion was opened by Frank J. Sprague. He reviewed his past utterances upon the subject and pointed out that railway operation had developed very closely in line with his prophecies. William J. Davis, Jr., of the Southern Pacific Railroad, said that the proper voltage depends upon the tonnage to be hauled and the limitations as to speed. The problem narrows down to the question of the number of locomotives required on a given division and their cost. In the case of the Milwaukee electrification, a change from 3,000 volts to 5,000 volts would materially increase the cost of locomotives, say by 30 to 40 per cent. This would more than offset any saving.

William B. Potter said that in the Milwaukee case the total cost for 3,000 volts or 5,000 volts would be about the same, but it would be differently divided between copper and rolling stock. Since depreciation of the latter is rapid, the higher voltage would be a disadvantage.

Calvert Townley objected to any standardization of voltage at the present time. He attributed a recent tendency for higher voltages on direct-current systems to the competition of the single-phase system. S. I. Oesterreicher spoke of the application of storage batteries on direct-current railway systems. Benjamin F. Wood considered dependability of operation of greater importance than any features of cost. E. V. Pannell discussed operation of motors at different voltages. He considered 3,000 volts the maximum desirable at the present time.

A. H. Armstrong referred to the gradual progress in increasing direct voltages and stated that an experimental test had already been made in Schenectady with apparatus using 6,000 volts. But the higher the voltage the greater the cost and he considered 3,000 volts the most suitable at the present time for railroad electrification. The experimental line using 5,000 volts shows the possibility of higher voltage, but the paper throws no light on the economic advantage of using it.